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District Attorney Jackie Lacey Files Criminal Charges Against SoCal Gas for Aliso Canyon Leak

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey announced today that criminal charges were filed against Southern California Gas Co. for failing to immediately report the gas leak at its Aliso Canyon facility to the proper state authorities.

"While we recognize that neither the criminal charges nor the civil lawsuits will offer the residents of Los Angeles County a complete solution, it is important that Southern California Gas Co. be held responsible for its criminal actions," District Attorney Lacey said.

"We will do everything we can as prosecutors to help ensure that the Aliso Canyon facility is brought into compliance. I believe we can best serve our community using the sanctions available through a criminal conviction to prevent similar public health threats in the future."

The criminal complaint filed today charges the company with four misdemeanor counts: three counts of failing to report the release of hazardous materials from Oct. 23 to Oct. 26, 2015, and one count of discharging air contaminants, beginning on Oct. 23, 2015, to the present.

If convicted, the company could be fined up to \$25,000 a day for each day that it failed to notify the California Office of Emergency Services. The company also could be fined up to \$1,000 per day for air pollution violations.

Deputy District Attorneys Yael Massry and Daniel Wright in the Environmental Law Section are prosecuting the case.

Arraignment for the company in case 6SC00433 is set for Feb. 17 at the Santa Clarita Branch of the Los Angeles County Superior Court, Department 3.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department is investigating the case.

About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Last year, the <u>Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office</u> prosecuted more than 71,000 felony defendants and nearly 112,000 misdemeanor defendants.